

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4686

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ACCRA 5884

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, GH

SUBJ: LAWYERS END STRIKE AND REQUEST POLITICAL REFORMS

1. AT EMERGENCY MEETING JULY 19 GHANA BAR ASSOCIATION
DECIDED END STRIKE BY ITS MEMBERSHIP IN EFFECT SINCE APRIL 3
AND RESUME NORMAL SERVICES. ASSOCIATION WELCOMED CHANGE
IN GOVERNMENT AND PRAISED NEW ADMINISTRATION'S RELEASE OF
DETAINEES AND AMNESTY TO EXILES.

2. ASSOCIATION THEN URGED SMC TO: A) UNFREEZE ASSETS
OF THOSE WHO WENT INTO EXILE AS RESULT OF REFERENDUM;
B) DECLARE NULL AND VOID REFERENDUM RESULTS AND APPOINT
COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO ITS CONDUCT; C) REINSTATE
FORMER ELECTORAL COMMISSIONER JUSTICE ABBAN; D) ABANDON
UNION GOVERNMENT CONCEPT; E) DISSOLVE PRESENT CONSTITUTIONAL
COMMISSION AND ESTABLISH CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY TO DRAFT
NEW CONSTITUTION BASED ON 1969 CONSTITUTION; F) RESTORE
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PROFESSIONAL BODIES REGISTRATION DECREE OF 1973 AND UNFREEZE
ASSETS OF THOSE GROUPS; G) WITHDRAW OFFICIAL FINANCIAL
SUPPORT FROM PEACE AND SOLIDARITY COUNCIL AND OTHER
POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS USED BY ACHEAMPONG IN ATTEMPT WIN
POPULAR SUPPORT; H) REPEAL NEWSPAPER LICENSING DECREE OF
1973 AND FREE THE PRESS FROM GOVERNMENTAL INTERFERENCE;
I) RELEASE ALL PERSONS NOW IN DETENTION WITHOUT TRIAL OR

BY COURT ORDER; J) REPEAL SMC DECREE 82 PERMITTING DETENTION OF PERSONS FOR 30 DAYS WITHOUT WARRANTS AND ARMED FORCES SPECIAL POWERS DECREE OF 1974 CONFERRING POWERS OF ARREST ON ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL.

3. COMMENT: BAR ASSOCIATION WAS LEADER IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS OPPOSITION TO ACHEAMPONG. ALTHOUGH CONTINUING STRIKE BY LAWYERS HAS GONE VIRTUALLY UNNOTICED, ITS TERMINATION IS A MEASURE OF SUCCESS OF NEW REGIME'S SINCERE ATTEMPTS AT NATIONAL CONCILIATION. CATALOG OF DEMANDS IS PROBABLY FAIRLY REPRESENTATIVE OF RESPONSIBLE OPPOSITION AND IS COUCHED IN MODERATE LANGUAGE. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT NEW ADMINISTRATION MAY BE WILLING TO SATISFY SOME ALTHOUGH NOT ALL OF THEM. PARTICULARLY INDICATIVE OF NEW CLIMATE IS FACT THAT DEMANDS WERE GIVEN FULL PUBLICITY BY OFFICIAL RADIO AND PRESS, AN UNHEARD OF TREATMENT BY PREVIOUS REGIME.
HOLMES

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